

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend Claims 1 and 20 as indicated.

1. (Currently Amended) A program controller apparatus arranged for use with a modular system, and arranged to manage a program for use with a replaceable hardware module of the modular system, the module being a customer-replaceable part, the controller apparatus being arranged to manage the program automatically, according to an agreement between a supplier and a customer, the agreement having terms stored within the program controller apparatus, and according to a stored history of use of the hardware module.
2. (Previously Presented) The program of Claim 1, the history being stored on the hardware module.
3. (Original) The program controller of Claim 1 arranged to be part of a shelf controller for managing modules in the form of cards for carrying out functions of a network element for a telecommunications network.
4. (Original) The program controller of Claim 1, the program controller being arranged to determine an identity of the system and check it is authorized for use with that system.
5. (Original) The program controller of Claim 1, the history comprising a program identifier of a program previously loaded on the module.
6. (Original) The program controller of Claim 1, the history comprising a licence identifier of a program previously loaded on the module.
7. (Original) The program controller of Claim 1, arranged to be located remotely from the system, and coupled to the system by a communications link.

8. (Original) The program controller of Claim 1, arranged to maintain an inventory record of identities and relationships of modules, programs, and license information for a given customer.
9. (Original) The program controller of Claim 1 arranged to determine any changes in modules, at initialization, and to check the configuration of any newly coupled modules.
10. (Previously Presented) The program controller of Claim 1, wherein the controller copies at least a part of the program to the module at initialization.
11. (Previously Presented) The program controller of Claim 1, wherein the controller authorizes at least a part of the program for the module at initialization.
12. (Original) The program controller of Claim 1, the history comprising an indication of which systems the module has been coupled to.
13. (Original) The program controller of Claim 1, the program having licence information indicating a capability licensed, the program controller being arranged to configure the program according to the capability licensed.
14. (Original) The program controller of Claim 1, the program having license information indicating license expiry information.

15-19. Cancelled

20. (Currently Amended) A modular system comprising:
one or more hardware modules; and
a program controller, arranged for use with the modular system, and arranged to manage a program for use with a replaceable hardware module of the modular system, the hardware module being a customer-replaceable part, the controller being arranged to manage the program automatically, according to an agreement between a supplier and a customer, and according to a stored history of use of the hardware module.

21. (Original) The system of Claim 20, having an interface for coupling to a remote server to pass information for a supplier to maintain an inventory of programs and modules.

22-27. Cancelled.

28. (Previously Presented) A method performed by a program controller apparatus of managing a program that operates upon a replaceable hardware module of a modular system, the module being a customer-replaceable part, the method having the steps of accessing a stored history of use of the hardware module, and controlling the program automatically, according to the history and according to an agreement between a supplier and a customer.

29. (Original) Apparatus for managing a program for use with a replaceable hardware module of a modular system, the module being a customer-replaceable part, the apparatus having means for accessing a stored history of use of the hardware module, and means for managing the program automatically, according to the history and according to an agreement between a supplier and a customer.

30. (Previously Presented) A computer program embedded in a computer readable storage medium, the computer program operating upon a replaceable hardware module of a modular system, the module being a customer-replaceable part, the computer program performing the steps of accessing a stored history of use of the hardware module, and controlling the program

automatically, according to the history and according to an agreement between a supplier and a customer.

31. (Original) A method of offering a communications service over a network using the system of Claim 20.

32-33. Cancelled.